

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please amend the specification as follows.

Please amend the abstract as show below:

**Abstract**

The present disclosure invention provides methods for modulating the cholesterol level of a cell.  
In some aspects, methods relate to contacting a cell with one or more cholesterol-modulating  
compounds, thereby increasing or decreasing the cholesterol level of the cell.a screening method  
for identifying test agents that modulate cell membrane cholesterol activity. The modulating  
activity of the test agents may be measured using lytic compounds, which cause cell lysis or  
increases in cell permeability in response to cell membrane cholesterol levels. The invention  
further provides therapeutic agents that are identified using the screening method. The  
therapeutic agents either increase or decrease the cell membrane cholesterol activity, cholesterol  
concentration and/or both in vivo and/or in vitro.